

BRIDGE ACROSS THE WHITE RIVER NEAR BATESVILLE,  
ARK.

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JANUARY 28, 1925.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

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Mr. PARKS of Arkansas, from the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 3884]

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, to whom was referred the bill S. 3884, an act granting the consent of Congress to the county of Independence, Ark., to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across the White River, at or near the city of Batesville, in the county of Independence, in the State of Arkansas, having considered the same, report thereon with amendment and as so amended recommend that it pass.

The bill as amended has the approval of the War and Agriculture Departments, as will appear by the letters attached and which are made a part of this report.

Amend the bill as follows:

Page 2, at the top of the page, insert before line 1 a new section to read as follows:

SEC. 2. That the State of Arkansas, or any political subdivision or division thereof, within or adjoining which said bridge is located, may at any time, by agreement or by condemnation in accordance with the laws of said State, acquire all right, title, and interest in said bridge and the approaches thereto constructed under authority of this act, for the purpose of maintaining and operating such bridge as a free bridge by the payment to the owners of the reasonable value thereof, not to exceed in any event the construction cost thereof: *Provided*, That the said State or political subdivision or division thereof may operate such bridge as a toll bridge not to exceed five years from date of acquisition thereof.

Page 2, line 1, change "2" to "3."

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WAR DEPARTMENT, December 26, 1923.

Respectfully returned to the chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate.

The bridge specified in the accompanying bill, S. 625, Sixty-eighth Congress, first session, authorizing Independence County, Ark., to construct a bridge

across the White River at or near Batesville, Ark., is thought to be the one authorized by an act of Congress approved July 1, 1922 (Public, No. 269, 67th Cong.). Under the terms of the latter act the time for commencing construction, subject to the provisions of the general bridge act of March 23, 1906, expired July 1, 1923, and it is assumed that the purpose of the bill under consideration is to extend the time.

So far as concerns the interests committed to this department no objection is known to extending the times for commencing and completing the work of construction for the customary periods of one and three years, respectively, but it is my view that it is preferable to do so in direct terms than to duplicate the existing act. The bill herewith has been amended accordingly, and as thus amended I know of no objection to its favorable consideration by Congress.

JOHN W. WEEKS, *Secretary of War.*

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
Washington, December 24, 1924.

HON. SAMUEL E. WINSLOW,  
*Chairman Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce,  
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. WINSLOW: Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of December 17 inclosing a copy of H. R. 10785 for report thereon and for such views relative thereto as the department might desire to communicate.

This bill would authorize the county of Independence, Ark., and its successors and assigns, to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge and approaches thereto across the White River at or near Batesville in said county. The location of the proposed bridge is on the system of Federal-aid highways approved for Arkansas and this department is advised that an attempt is being made to organize an improvement district to construct a free bridge, but that if the effort to organize the improvement district should fail the county judge has the authority to issue a franchise for a toll bridge. This department would regard it as unfortunate if the bridge which may be built under the authority which the bill would grant should be constructed as a toll bridge. As a safeguard against this contingency, the department would suggest that the words "and assigns," appearing in line 5 of the bill, be stricken out. Aside from this, there seems to be no objection to favorable action on the bill from the standpoint of this department.

Sincerely,

HOWARD M. GORE, *Secretary.*